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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 JEDDAH 000392

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/12/2027

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PK](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [SA](#)

SUBJECT: SAUDIS UNSURPRISED BY SHARIF'S RETURN; CONCERNED WITH MAINTAINING STABILITY IN PAKISTAN

REF: RIYADH 01...

[1](#)1. (S) SUMMARY. In Ambassador Fraker's September 11 meeting with Prince Muqrin, Head of the General Intelligence Presidency, Muqrin reiterates END SUMMARY.

----- MEDIA COVERAGE

[1](#)2. (U) Saudi, English, and Arabic language newspapers featured prominently on September 11 front page articles on Sharif's September 10 departure.

[1](#)3. (U) Upon Sharif's return, Prince Muqrin and other Saudi officials received him at the airport. The press quoted a diplomatic source as saying, "No Saudi diplomat participated in the negotiations as yet."

----- OFFICIAL RESPONSE

[1](#)4. (S) During Ambassador Fraker's meeting with Prince Muqrin, the Prince first summarized the ten-year agreement, brokered by Rafiq Hariri, and then discussed the current situation in Pakistan.

[1](#)5. (S) Regarding Sharif's return, the Prince himself met with Sharif when he arrived in Jeddah. According to Muqrin, Sharif thought he might become President.

[1](#)6. (S) Prince Muqrin speculated that there is probably an agreement between Sharif and the Pakistani Chief Justice, adding that if the Chief Justice agrees, Sharif will become President. JEDDAH 00000392 002 OF 002

become President. Prince Muqrin stated that he is almost certain the Chief Justice will side with Sharif, noting that he believes the run-off election will be held in November.

[1](#)7. (S) The Prince explained that, as in Lebanon, the Pakistani constitution requires individuals working within the government to be outside the country for a period of time.

[1](#)8. (S) Following up on his September 10 conversation with PolOff (reftel), Second Secretary at the Pakistani Embassy, Syed Zahir Raza (stric) stated that the Pakistani government is concerned with maintaining stability in Pakistan.

[1](#)9. (S) COMMENT. It is clear that Saudi Arabia has a strategic interest in facilitating stability in Pakistan. While the SAG denies involvement, the Saudi government is clearly concerned with the situation in Pakistan.